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House of Representatives

The House was not in session today. Its next meeting will be held on Tuesday, October 20, 2009, at 12.30 p.m.

Senate

MONDAY, OCTOBER 19, 2009

The Senate met at 2 p.m. and was called to order by the Honorable MARK R. WARNER, a Senator from the Commonwealth of Virginia.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

O God, You are our refuge. When we are exhausted by life's efforts or bewildered by life's problems or wounded by life's sorrows, we come to You for shelter.

Strengthen our lawmakers for their challenging work. When their tasks are beyond their power and duty calls for more than they have to give, renew them with Your might. Help them to believe in Your power and to be certain that You are able to do for them above all that they can ask or think. Strong Deliverer, be for each of them a strength and shield in these momentous times.

We pray in Your sovereign Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable MARK R. WARNER led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication

to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. BYRD).

The legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, October 19, 2009.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable MARK R. WARNER, a Senator from the Commonwealth of Virginia, to perform the duties of the Chair.

ROBERT C. BYRD,
President pro tempore.

Mr. WARNER thereupon assumed the chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

HEALTH CARE REFORM

Mr. REID. Mr. President, fixing a system so badly damaged by decades of mismanagement and manipulation is not an easy task. It is no secret that health care is no exception.

We are not doing it simply to keep us busy; that is, legislate on health care. We have a bevy of other backbreaking problems that have piled up over the past 8 years—everything from energy, to education, to Wall Street abuses—only to be passed on to this Congress and the Obama administration.

Nor are we doing it because the health insurance industry wants us to do it; just the opposite. In fact, they

are doing all they can to protect their reckless policies and raging profits.

We are doing this legislating on health care because the American people demand that we do it. Families of all backgrounds and from every State are counting on us to act. Last November, it was one of the primary reasons they called on Democrats to correct our country's course.

The American people are closely watching this debate. They are listening to the policies being proposed, and they can see the strategies employed toward those ends. They are watching, and here is what the American people are saying in response: Nearly two-thirds of them know Republicans are not working in good faith with Democrats to reform America's broken health insurance system.

They are right. While we have made every effort to create a good bill that can earn the support of as many Senators as possible, Republicans have made every effort to stop any bill, regardless of what is in that bill.

How do we know this? We know this because Republicans have offered no ideas for reform. We know this because while they talk in the abstract about proposals, they have yet to offer any of their own. But, most of all, we know this because Republicans say it themselves.

In August, the junior Senator from Arizona predicted that almost all Republicans would oppose health insurance reform, regardless of any concessions Democrats made.

Then the senior Senator from Oklahoma said—and I quote—

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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